



Framing a theory-grounded research agenda related to partnerships

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Keywords: Research agenda, theory, interpersonal relationships, student partnerships, organizational partnerships

Track: Community partnerships and outcomes

Format: Symposium

Summary

This symposium is one of five sessions in a series on framing a research agenda in multiple arenas: students, faculty, institutions, communities, and partnerships. Drawing on *Research on Service Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Assessment* (Clayton, Bringle, & Hatcher, in press), we will discuss theories relevant to research related to partnerships between and among

all constituents in service-learning, critique previous research in this arena, and collaboratively generate recommendations for practice and future research.

Julie Hatcher will open the session by inviting collaborative critique of research related to partnerships. Hatcher will share a model for conceptualizing research in terms of the convergence of theory, design, practice, and measurement (Bringle, Clayton, & Hatcher, in press) and will facilitate discussion of her colleagues' work accordingly.

Bob Bringle will bring theory related to interpersonal relationships to bear on our discussion of research related to partnerships, and he will propose the SOFAR model (Students, community Organization staff, Faculty, Administrators on campus, and community Residents) as a framework for differentiating and organizing the wide range of relationships involved in service learning. A research agenda for how the many relationships between and among the full set of individuals can be investigated through the lens of their partnership status and potential will be outlined.

Barbara Jacoby will focus our attention on student partnerships with the other constituents in service learning. Students enact numerous roles in these partnerships, including but not limited to learners, teaching assistants, peer leaders, reflection facilitators, co-designers of projects and courses, researchers, advocates, organizers, advisors, mentors, and scholars. Dewey and Freire's theories provide means of conceptualizing students as civic actors to influence communities, democracy, culture, class, and race (Deans, 1999). A research agenda related to student partnerships will be outlined.

Emily Janke's (2008, 2009) work on inquiry into organization-level partnerships, which draws on theory related to interorganizational relationships and partnership entities will also be shared. Applied to the study of service-learning partnerships, an organizational-level approach enables researchers to study the way in which information, decisions, expectations, and actions are made by organizations.

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